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GOVERNMENT FOR THE PEOPLE

The Seeds of War

By DR. HENRY GEORGE III

Part 2

The greatest menace to our republic is not to be found in the German tank or the Jap sniper but in the indifference and unwillingness on the part of the American people to think and to take an active part in their government.

As long as great masses refuse to think and to act (not just the passive act of voting)—as long as they take the dangerous attitude that government and politics are corrupt and are manipulated by corrupt men, and that an honest man cannot make his weight felt—so long as they hold these concepts they are guilty of the crime of omission, they are selling their country to the highest bidder. As long as they leave government to the politicians they have no right but to expect what they get, wars, too-heavy taxes, and injustice. Wars are not created by despots like Hitler, Mussolini or Tojo, but by the lethargy and indifference of the people who permit these mountebanks to enslave them and then stalk the earth. For it is only natural that those in power will listen to him who speaks loudest and what might be a mighty roar of of the people for the common good becomes a tangled jargon of those interested in private and petty ends, while the common men seethes in inarticulate discontent.

In no place do we find the above statement more clearly demonstrated than in the field of trade—local, national and international. In our indifference as to how individual interests supersede common interests we plant the seeds that germinate into war.

Let us then examine into the philosophies which give foundation to our two great political parties the Democratic party dedicated to free trade and the Republican party champion of protective tariffs. We are told repeatedly that free trade or protection is no longer an issue, that we should forget such things and vote for the man. It is only when issues are lost sight of and principles are forgotten that the Caesars appear, and that there IS a difference between these two theories and between these two parties this and succeeding articles will attempt to prove.

Why, if free trade is natural trade, unrestricted by artificial barriers, why should we want protection? Why if we pave a street, deepen a harbor, invent paper money or notes to facilitate trade, why do we invent barriers to prevent our people from inter-communication and trade? We have been told that there is a revenue tariff and a protective tariff. What is the difference and how do they operate?

Our Federal Constitution made Federal tariffs possible while prohibiting state tariffs. We would prevent trade with the outside while stimulating trade among ourselves. This very situation provided one of the greatest motives of the Civil War, for cotton raised in the South for export, in the absence of industrialization was blocked by tariff protection; thus the South was taxed for the benefit of the North. And by the same token even today we find working men and labor unions who honestly feel that protective tariffs protect them against cheap foreign labor, and thus the great trusts and combines, who can pay \$80,000,000 annually for their labor spy machine, stand out as the champion and protector of American labor by demanding a higher and higher protective tariff. Labor is on the horns of the dilemma for while it mistrusts those of special privilege and protective tariffs it finds in the free trade an apparent indifference to the effort of labor to raise wages, and attain security.

Too frequently the free trader has classed labor with scapiron that can be bought in a free market, and has ignored the fact that human beings are deprived of their natural opportunities of self-employment by monopolization of natural resources and are thus compelled by actual starvation to bid one against the other. Thus it is easy to see how for the average man the problem of protection or free trade becomes confused, and in his desire to extricate himself he pins his hopes on the candidate whose promises most appeal.

Several year ago I received a letter from a member of the Chamber of Commerce. In this letter I was advised to "Buy Delaware," that is to have my house painted by Delaware painters, my carpentry work by Delaware carpenters, in short encourage trade among my Delaware brothers. But what

was I to do if I could get my house painted more cheaply by a Pennsylvanian, or new steps made for my porch by a Virginian? Such a possibility would be discouraged by a protective tariff in the form of a license, that these foreigners would have to pay before commencing to work. When I showed this letter to a Pennsylvania plumbing contractor he immediately was en-

raged and wanted to have Pennsylvania industries assume the same attitude toward Delaware workers. Thus the seeds of war are planted.

Protection means the levying of duties upon imported commodities for the purpose of protecting from competition the home producers of such commodities.

And like our Chamber of Commerce member; protectionists assume that to secure the highest prosperity each community, state and nation should produce for itself everything that it is capable of producing, and that to this end its home industries must be protected against competition from without. Thus the tariff, as an original source of revenue for the infant Federal government, was forgotten in the clamour for a tariff of protection of infant industries and American labor.

Years ago I saw the Arizona militia along the California border because California could export to Arizona citrus fruit but would not accept the same fruit from Arizona.

Was this protection of the California fruit growers against their brothers in Arizona not cause for hostility? When trade ceases war begins. If we would carry the concept of protection to its logical conclusion would not every household be a veritable blockhouse armed to the teeth and fearful lest some neighbor should attempt to exchange with them?

The highest ethics universally recount the fact that the greatest good for each is to be found in the good of others, and that the great yearning of men is for harmony, understanding and help—not in jealousies and strife. May not free trade or protection be at least in part the answer to our loftiest aspirations. Then in our future thought let us consider principles first and relegate to the man the duty of steering by those precepts, and not of superseding them.